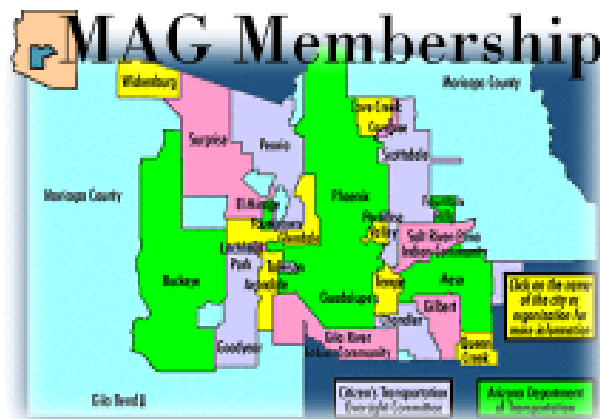


The Maricopa Association of Governments

(MAG) is a regional organization that develops policies and makes decisions in a variety of areas, including transportation, air quality, land use and human ser-

vices. Its members include 24 incorporated cities and towns in Maricopa County, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Gila River Indian Community, and Maricopa County. MAG is governed by a Regional Council comprised primarily of city mayors and other elected officials. A representative of the Arizona Department of Transportation Board and a representative of the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee also have a vote on the Council for transportation related issues.

The MAG Regional Council is the governing and chief policy-making body for the organization. The MAG Regional Council encourages videoconferencing as a way to reduce travel, relieve traffic congestion and decrease air pollution. Videoconferencing will save time, widen agency participation, increase public involvement, and expand communications both inside and outside the region.



The MAG Regional Videoconferencing System (RVS) is a partnership between MAG and its member agencies. This PC-based system is comprised of a network of television/computer units located at all member agencies and at

the MAG offices. The MAG offices also serve as the main hub site, housing the equipment and digital network that connects all of the components of the system together. The System allows for the transmission of voice, video and data which enables full meeting participation and collaboration.

The MAG Regional Videoconferencing System is funded for the first three years as a national demonstration project through the Federal Highway Administration. Funding is included for the equipment, network, MAG staff assistance, training, and related materials.

The implementation is the culmination of three years of planning and preparation by MAG and its member agencies. It is anticipated that its use will grow dramatically as member agencies begin to utilize the full potential of this system for MAG business as well as to conduct a wide variety of internal and external agency meetings.



VIDEOCONFERENCING HIGHLIGHTS

- Videoconferencing saves time, improves meeting attendance, reduces travel, helps improve air quality.
- Videoconferencing is a MAG Regional Council priority.
- The MAG Regional Videoconferencing System (RVS) is operational now.
- Videoconferencing equipment is located at each member agency and at MAG.
- All MAG member agencies can use the RVS for any agency need.
- The RVS also includes an audio conferencing capability which can be used separately.
- There is also an audio-only feature on the RVS in the event of a temporary video component failure.
- Federal funding pays for the first three years of use.
- The Site Coordinator at each member agency schedules use of the videoconferencing equipment and trains employees how to use it.
- Call your Site Coordinator to set up or attend any videoconference.

VIDEOCONFERENCING IS HERE!

What is the Regional Videoconferencing System?

It is a videoconferencing network of television/computer units located at the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) member agency locations across the region, including 24 cities and towns, the Gila River Indian Community, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Maricopa County, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and at the MAG offices. MAG's videoconferencing rooms can be used by the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA).

Who may use it?

Employees and elected officials of all MAG member agencies may use the System for MAG business and for agency business. Each agency should decide whether to allow public use of its equipment for non-agency business.

What is a videoconference like?

During a videoconference, all meeting participants will be able to see, hear, and talk with the other attendees on a large television screen, just as if everyone were sitting in the room across the table from each other.

What are some uses of the System?

The System will accommodate multiple smaller meetings at one time as well as large group meetings. Some suggested uses are: MAG meetings, employee training, meetings with other organizations that have videoconferencing equipment, remote staff meetings, job interviews of prospective candidates, remote citizen participation in meetings and forums, one-to-one videoconferences, and multiple audioconferences.

Why should I use it?

Videoconferencing saves time, reduces travel, improves meeting attendance and participation and extends outreach to citizens. Videoconferencing helps reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in Maricopa County.

Who can help me arrange a videoconference?

The Videoconferencing Site Coordinator at each member agency arranges participation at meetings via the Regional Videoconferencing System.



WHAT ARE SOME USES OF THE SYSTEM?

The MAG Regional Videoconferencing System can be used to attend a wide variety of meetings and functions. The System can be connected to almost any videoconferencing system or unit in the world, as long as it is certified by your Site Coordinator prior to the videoconference. Below is a partial list of suggested uses:

- MAG meetings
- Agency-to-agency meetings
- Staff meetings
- One-to-one videoconferences
- Job interviews of prospective candidates
- Training by vendors
- Safety training
- Briefings of employees at remote sites
- Presentations by consultants and vendors
- Multi-party audioconference calls and videoconference calls
- Continuing education training
- Non-profit and community organization meetings
- Special guest speakers for meetings and workshops
- Public outreach and input for regional forums and meetings

USING THE SYSTEM



Each Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) member agency has designated two people in their organization as the Site Coordinator and a backup person for the MAG Regional Videoconferencing System. You must contact your Site Coordinator in order to set up or attend a videoconference at your organization.

The Site Coordinator will ask you a few brief questions and then schedule your use of the room and the System equipment. If you are not familiar with how to use the equipment, the Site Coordinator will show you how to place a videoconference call and start the meeting. The Site Coordinator may also attend the first few minutes to help ensure that your meeting is successfully underway. If you need help during the meeting, your Site Coordinator will be available in person or by phone to assist you and to report any problems to the equipment vendor if necessary.

It is only necessary to go through the MAG “bridge” when connecting three or more sites together. When making a “point-to-point” call which connects only one other site with your equipment, it is not necessary to connect through the MAG bridge.

Participants can attend a videoconference through either video or audio. The System will accommodate a maximum of 27 videoconference sites and 48 audioconference sites at one time. In addition, the audio-only feature serves as a backup in the event that the video component of the System fails temporarily during the videoconference.



Your System equipment will connect with most other videoconferencing units or systems in the world, as long as that unit or system is certified by your Site Coordinator.

WHAT TO EXPECT

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AT A VIDEOCONFERENCE?



During a videoconference, you will be able to see, hear, and talk with the other meeting attendees on a large television screen, just as if everyone was sitting in the room across the table from each other. There may be a slight delay during audio and video transmission similar to speaking on an overseas phone call. It may be a little disconcerting at first to see yourself on the video monitor. You may wish to refrain from fidgeting or whispering to avoid distracting others.

At the beginning of a meeting, introduce each participant at all sites so that all attendees are familiar with each other. In a meeting with a large number of participants, or in an audioconference, it may also be necessary to say your name before you ask a question or make a comment – at least until the group recognizes your face and/or voice.

For best results, only one person should speak at a time. You should allow for a small pause between speakers. When several people speak at once, the microphone at each site picks up only one speaker. The other voices are lost. In addition, it may take a second or two for the camera or its operator to find and focus on a speaker in the group. Speaking a little more slowly helps find the speaker easily. After the first meeting or two, this will come naturally for you.

The Site Coordinator can assist you in scheduling an audioconference or videoconference, reserving and setting up the meeting room, providing assistance and reporting any technical difficulties. Your Site Coordinator is also available to “practice” a videoconference with you to enhance your meeting effectiveness.

Regional

Videoconferencing System

Connecting Communities

The Future Is Now!



The future is now! The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Regional Videoconferencing System is now available for your use. The System connects up to 27 sites for a videoconference and up to 48 sites for an audioconference. Each MAG member agency has the necessary equipment for you to attend MAG meetings without leaving your own community.

During a videoconference, you will be able to see, hear, and talk with the other meeting attendees on a large television screen, just as if everyone was sitting in the room across the table from each other. The System will accommodate multiple smaller meetings at one time as well as large group meetings.

Videoconferencing can help you in many ways, such as:

- Increasing MAG meeting attendance
- Allowing meetings with other organizations that have videoconferencing equipment
- Increasing remote citizen participation in meetings and forums
- Training of your employees
- Interviewing prospective job candidates

Videoconferencing saves you time. It also reduces travel, improves meeting attendance and participation, and extends outreach to citizens. By videoconferencing whenever practical, you will be doing your part to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.



The Site Coordinator at your organization will help you attend your next meeting via the MAG Regional Videoconferencing System.

For more information call your Site Coordinator, or call the MAG Regional Videoconferencing Office at (602) 452-5095.



WHAT ARE MAG POLICIES REGARDING THE SYSTEM?

System Use

Regularly scheduled MAG meetings have first priority for use of the MAG Regional Videoconferencing System. Some examples of this are: Regional Council, Management Committee, Human Services Policy Committee, Air Quality Advisory Committee, and the Telecommunications Advisory Group.

MAG member agencies have second priority for use of the System on a first-come, first-served basis, as long as there is capacity to accommodate the meeting which is requested by the member agency. It is anticipated that there will be adequate capacity to handle MAG member agency requests for the foreseeable future. Any meeting which is hosted by a MAG member agency is eligible for System use.

MAG Meeting Room Use

There are two meeting rooms at the MAG Offices that have videoconferencing equipment installed in them. The Saguaro room accommodates large meetings and the Palo Verde room accommodates smaller groups. In the event of a potential scheduling conflict, the above priorities apply.

Use By Non-MAG Members

Meeting requests which are not hosted by MAG or one of its member agencies will be handled on an individual basis subject to MAG approval and to available capacity.

Suggested Member Agency Policies for Videoconferencing

There may be times when scheduling conflicts arise with videoconferencing equipment. It is suggested that each member agency develop policies that establish priorities for use of videoconferencing rooms. Member agencies are strongly encouraged to develop policies in which solutions to such conflicts are centered around minimizing vehicle miles traveled.

It is also suggested that each member agency develop a policy for use of their videoconferencing equipment by non-agency organizations such as non-profit organizations, community groups, and private businesses.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How is a videoconference different from a face-to-face meeting?

A: During a videoconference, you will be able to see, hear, and talk with the other attendees on a large television screen, just as if everyone were sitting in the same room. However, there are some slight differences. For example, there may be a short delay during audio and video transmission similar to speaking on an overseas phone call. It also may be a little disconcerting at first to see yourself on the video monitor. You do not need to wear special clothing or makeup for videoconferences. You may wish to refrain from fidgeting or whispering to avoid distracting others. You may want to put your system on mute until you wish to speak.

Q: How will I know who is talking?

A: At the beginning of the videoconference, you may want to have attendees at each site introduce themselves. Also, each person may want to speak a little more slowly to allow the camera or camera operator to find them in the group. Pausing slightly after each person speaks will help avoid two people talking at once. This will come naturally to you after the first couple of videoconferences.

Q: What if I have meeting materials for the group?

A: The MAG hub site has the capability to view spreadsheets, electronic slide presentations, overhead transparencies and other meeting materials. All end sites have the capability to show slide presentations, spreadsheets, and other electronic documents. For best results, long text documents and hand-outs should be e-mailed to attendees prior to the meeting.

**Q: What do I have to do to set up or attend a videoconference?**

A: The Site Coordinator at each member agency arranges participation at meetings via the Regional Videoconferencing System. The Site Coordinator schedules the room and equipment, assists in connecting videoconferences, provides training and troubleshoots problems.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What if there are technical difficulties during the videoconference?

A: Your Site Coordinator will be available in person or by phone to assist you if there is a problem with the equipment. If the video component fails temporarily, the audio-only feature serves as a backup until the video problem is solved.

Q: How often can I use the System?

A: You can use the System any time as long as there is available capacity. Videoconferences scheduled outside of normal business hours need advance notice to ensure availability of technical assistance. Contact your Site Coordinator for details.

Q: What are my organization's responsibilities for this System?

A: Each MAG member agency must securely house all videoconferencing equipment and provide a Site Coordinator and a backup person. These Site Coordinators are responsible for scheduling and documenting meetings, training employees on how to operate the equipment and reporting any equipment problems to the equipment vendor or to the MAG Videoconferencing Office.

Q: Who else may use the System?

A: Employees and elected officials of all MAG member agencies may use the System for MAG business and for

agency business. Member agencies may also choose to host a videoconference for a private or non-profit organization. Videoconferencing requests that are not hosted by MAG or one of its member agencies will be handled on an individual basis, subject to MAG approval and to available capacity.

Q: How much will it cost my organization to use the System?

A: There is no cost to MAG member agencies to use the System for MAG committee meetings and MAG related meetings for the first three years. MAG will pay for the network, equipment, training, service and support, and MAG Videoconferencing Office assistance. However, member agencies must pay for any long distance calls made to access non-MAG videoconferencing systems and equipment, if applicable.

Q: Who else uses videoconferencing?

A: Several organizations have a videoconferencing system in place. Among them are the Arizona Department of Transportation; City of Scottsdale; State of Arizona; Maricopa County; Arizona State University; Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Health Association, Inc.; and the Maricopa Community Colleges.